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LETTER DATED 26 OCTOBER 1994 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of Burundi has examined your report to the Security Council dated 11 October 1994 concerning the situation in Burundi (S/1994/1152).

The Government has been struck, in particular, by paragraph 48 of the report, containing your conclusions and recommendations.

On instructions from the Government, I should like to clarify Burundi's position on the following points.

1. The suggestion to establish a "humanitarian base" at Bujumbura International Airport is welcome. If, however, that idea is to be implemented to good advantage and with success, full consideration must be given to the real needs of those persons who are now displaced, for they, too, still require sustained attention from the international community. It is essential to avoid giving the wrong impression - that only the problems of refugees and returnees are being addressed. In addition, further in-depth consideration should be given to the question of coordinating the humanitarian aid that might be provided under that formula.

2. It is proposed that a military presence should be maintained in Zaire with the capability to intervene "rapidly if the situation in Burundi should deteriorate suddenly". Today the Government of Burundi remains confident that it is in a position to deal with such an eventuality, in the light of the new political realities in Burundi. This idea of a military presence in Zaire might meet with a favourable response, provided it is stipulated that the aim is to help the Government of Zaire to maintain peace and security in the Zairian province of Kivu, disarm the armed bands and deter any subversive elements from moving towards the frontiers of Burundi and Rwanda. Indeed Kivu is harbouring a number of armed elements that are destabilizing peace and security in Rwanda, as well as in Burundi, notwithstanding the Zairian authorities' willingness and efforts to deter them.

3. The Government of Burundi categorically rejects the deployment of a contingent of guards, similar to those sent to Iraq, to protect the humanitarian organization teams in Burundi. The international observer mission in Burundi deployed by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the country's security forces are in position and are performing that task.

4. There is no objection in principle to the intention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to strengthen the Office of his Special Representative in Burundi. Nevertheless, the Government of Burundi would prefer to have such strengthening focus more on logistical aspects and to have the human contribution envisaged in the form of missions by ad hoc consultants. In any event, the Government remains ready to point out the specific short-term needs to be addressed.

5. The proposal to deploy in Burundi civilian human rights observers in support of the local administration meets with the full agreement of the Government of Burundi. This type of cooperation and the strengthening of the country's judiciary have just been endorsed by the General Assembly in paragraphs 4 (b) and 4 (c) of its resolution 49/7 of 25 October 1994.

The Government of Burundi reiterates its gratitude for the highly constructive role that you have constantly played in helping it through the serious crisis being experienced by the country since 21 October 1993.

I should be grateful if you would have this communication circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Melchiade BUKURU
Chargé d'affaires a.i.